

# The Lord's teaching (Quality: Average)

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[ 0 : 00 ] In the name of the Lord, I ask your prayerful attention to Psalm 25 and especially verse 12.

Though I may touch upon the two following verses, but especially from Psalm 25 verse 12. What man is he that feareth the Lord? Him, that man, shall he, the Lord, teach in the way that he, the Lord, shall choose?

What man is he that feareth the Lord? Him, shall he, the Lord, shall he, the Lord, shall choose?

That hymn we have just been singing, as I think a prayer in every verse.

I wonder if you, or my Sarah, sung that hymn as a prayer. What must I do in the first verse?

[ 1 : 29 ] In the second, take away the heart of stone. In the third one, several prayers, make me willing. Take away my darling sin.

In the fourth, teach me, Lord. In the fifth, work in me. And in the sixth, stop the whirlwind of my will. And now thy love almighty show.

I often tremble as I think how, especially my unregeneracy, but I confess many times since. I've sung hymns prayerlessly, carelessly.

Enjoying the music, enjoying singing, but not making melody in my heart to the Lord. Do you, do I?

But now, the subject before us this evening, came to my mind early this morning, is concerning the Lord's teaching.

[ 2 : 37 ] And indeed, in this twelfth verse, it is the fifth time in this one psalm, we have this word, teach.

But before we look at that, and what a blessing it is, if the Lord is teaching you and me. Because the unregenerate, or rather, perhaps I should narrow it down, those that are not elect, will not be taught by the Lord in spiritual things, though he may teach them in spiritual things, though he may teach them in providential.

But the person that has this blessing, and what an infinite blessing it is, to be taught by the Lord, will be the man that feareth him.

Does that description apply to you and me? We are not speaking now of a slavish fear.

I think the last time I was here in June, I spoke on that word, fear not, for I am with thee. That refers to a slavish fear which tendeth to bondage.

[ 3 : 56 ] But this fear is the loving filial fear, respect, in other words, and obedience to a father's commands.

We read many descriptions of those that fear the Lord. You know, if we are told that something is made of silver, gold, or platinum, we look for the hallmark.

If you are told a spoon is made of silver, and you turn it over in this electroplated nickel silver, you know it lacking the hallmark, it's not true silver.

It may look the same when new, but the base metal will show through eventually, after wear and tear. And in any case, it will lack the weight of the solid article.

If you and I have this fear of the Lord, there will be certain hallmarks. We read many things concerning the fear of the Lord in the book of Proverbs.

[ 5 : 11 ] The fear of the Lord is to hate evil. I feel we should be very sparing in our use of that word, hate.

But nothing should be too strong to express our detestation of sin and evil.

Much might be said concerning Lot and how he came to be in Sodom, but being there, we read his righteous soul was vexed with a filthy conversation of the wicked.

He had that fear of the Lord, though it was not very evident when he pitched his tent towards Sodom, and not very evident later when he became drunk.

But the scriptures describe him as righteous man. And especially he had that humor of hating evil.

[ 6 : 26 ] In the prophecy of Malachi, we read a number of things there. We read of they that feared the Lord spake often one to another, and the Lord hearkened and heard it.

And a book of remembrance was written before him, for them that feared the Lord and that thought upon his name.

And what was heard and written, as it were, figuratively speaking, by the Lord? Not the grumbings and complainings, their aches and pains, not the discussion on the weather and all the other things that so often come to our lips, but what the Lord had done for their souls, or what they were praying for the Lord to do.

Often, not once in a lifetime when they came before the church, not just when after some signal remarkable deliverance, but often.

How short one feels personally to come in this manner. And then in the next chapter you read, of that great blessing unto you that fear my name.

[ 7 : 53 ] And he follows the word, but, after describing the portion of the wicked, that they shall be stubble. Stubble is what is left when the harvest is gathered in.

And the day that come it shall burn them up, saith the Lord of hosts, that it shall leave them neither root nor branch. But, by comparison, unto you that fear my name, shall the Son of righteousness arise, with healing in his wings.

And ye shall go forth, and grow up, as calves of the soul. We sung in our opening hymn, the men that fear the norm, in every state, are blessed.

not just only on those times when they are, as it were, on the mount with the Lord, but in the times of trial, sanctified trials, distress, maybe bereavements and losses, in every state of life.

What an infinite mercy there. if you and I have this fear of the Lord. Now, if there was one example of a man that feared the Lord, it was in the case of Job.

[ 9 : 37 ] And this, of course, I want to refer to, as we come to the second part of this text. I've often thought that, apart from the Lord himself, no one has ever suffered all that Job suffered.

the loss of all his possessions in one day, and his seven sons, and presumably the three daughters, though it does not actually say so, all lost in one day.

And then, clearly not long afterwards, smitten with sore boils, from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head. If we, perhaps, have an injury on one arm, while we sleep on the other, if our feet are painful, we can sit down and rest them.

But no position could he get in, sitting, standing, lying, when he would not be in pain through the pressure upon those sore mouths.

And his wife said, curse God and die. And he was one that feared the Lord. We read in that opening chapter, there was a man named Job, and that man was perfect, meaning he led an upright life that none could point out some sin in his life.

[ 11 : 18 ] I'm not suggesting for one moment he was free from sin. Being a son of Adam, he must have had sin within him, but no sin could be appointed.

That man was perfect and upright, and one that feared God, and he stewed or hated evil.

And as we find he offered sacrifices for his loved ones, prayed for them continually.

I'm sure of this, that where there is that fear of the Lord in the heart, and of love to God, the souls of those near and dear to them will rest heavily upon the soul.

And next to our own soul's salvation, we shall desire theirs. And God said of him to Satan, there is none like him in the earth, a perfect and an upright man that feareth God and escheweth evil.

[ 12 : 39 ] But being a man that feared the Lord, Job, like you and me, if we fear the Lord, Job had to be taught by the Lord, but it was in the way that the Lord chose.

What easy and smooth paths we would by nature desire to be taught by the Lord. But as indeed we read in the book of Job, who teacheth like him?

Let us look then as the Lord enables at this, what teaching consists of. Teaching could be defined as systematic instruction.

When we are children at school, we are taught systematically. If you take just one simple subject of arithmetic or mathematics, the teacher does not start when the child arrives at school the first day with the problems of Euclid or trigonometry.

He teaches as it were to add and then to subtract and then it may be to multiply and divide.

[ 14 : 12 ] A short division, long division and so on. You do not need me to elaborate. But you see, the teacher teaches systematically.

And so does the Lord. So does the Lord. The Lord's people, we could say, do not have to run before they learn to walk.

Indeed, we could also say like a small child, they have to learn to crawl upon their knees before they'll even take one step.

In passing, I often pray for the congregations to come to chapel on their knees. when winter comes, when winter comes, and perhaps this parable may come to your thoughts then, often, especially the elderly, are afraid of falling on a slippery, icy path.

But I can tell you a method of proceeding where I can guarantee you won't fall however slippery the path.

[ 15 : 23 ] Wet, black, ice, and you don't get anything slipperier than that. You will not fall if you're on your knees. You won't fall however slippery the path.

And that is true in nature, and it most certainly is true spiritually. We sometimes sing Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees.

I can put it like this, Satan does not tremble when he sees a strong saint on his knees. Satan's strength is stronger than that of the strongest saint.

But he is weaker than the weakest saint that he's trusting in the Lord. Is that a riddle to you? Now, I said this word teaching is that this in the 12th verse is the fifth time it is mentioned in this individual psalm.

And I feel therefore we should just look at the verses that also speak of teaching. Indeed, one could say if there is one reculant and continual prayer throughout the book of Psalms, it is for the Lord's leading, teaching, guiding, showing his way and so on.

[ 17 : 04 ] In the fourth verse we read, show me the easy way, the way that will avoid trouble, persecution, tribulation, sacrifices, sacrifices, no, show me thy ways, oh Lord.

Teach me thy path. Another thought concerning teaching. A person that prays or indeed in natural things asks someone else to teach them, the fact that they are asking to be taught shows certain things.

It shows first of all they feel their ignorance. It secondly shows they have no willingness to remain in ignorance.

I am ignorant of whatever worldly amusements there are in knowledge this evening. But I am willfully ignorant.

I have no wish whatever to know. But if we are asking to be taught it shows we firstly feel our ignorance and secondly it show our desire to know.

[ 18 : 37 ] and then thirdly it shows that the person that we are asking to teach us can do so because they have more wisdom than we have.

Teach me thy paths. paths the paths in which I should walk in providential matters but more especially that path that way that leads to eternal life that narrow way yes it is a mercy if there are those especially those we love by nature that we can walk together within the things of God that there will be times in the pathway when it is so narrow there will only be room for your soul and Christ not even room for another to be with you however near and dear in that particular path teach me thy paths and then in the fifth path lead me in thy truth

Jesus said I am the way the truth and the life no man cometh unto the father but by me the only way that we can approach the father I want to look at that in a moment lead me in thy truth and teach me for thou art the God of my salvation on thee do I wait that is in prayer for the fulfillment of promises as we want to look at those all the day ah yes all the day all the day not just in the morning reading of the scriptures and the evening reading but all the day when we are indeed in the depth of trouble providentially or spiritually there won't be many minutes of our waking hours when we won't be in prayer concerning it and then in the eighth verse good and upright is the

Lord therefore will he teach sinners in the way in the ninth verse the meek will he guide in judgment and the meek will he teach his way what man then is he that feareth the Lord him that man shall he teach let us look a little as the Lord enables at some of the things he teaches his people and which they will pray for him to teach well we've mentioned already of one in the eighth verse therefore will he teach sinners in the way every elect vessel of mercy will be taught their sinnership by the

Holy Spirit I cannot remember the time when I did not know I was a sinner even as a very small child my parents had told me that to tell an untruth was a sin to be disobedient to them was a sin and I knew I had done those things and therefore I knew I was a sinner but my great concern was lest I should be found out and punished I wasn't otherwise very much concerned about you see I was taught by parents in the way but not at that time taught by the Lord you see the difference now do you know I'm sure most of you at least know of the first taught by parents but if you and I are to be taught by the

[ 23 : 26 ] Lord it will be him that teaches us we are sinners it may be a sudden work it may be a gradual work with the natural birth of a baby sometimes it is very sudden especially if the mother has had a number of children already the baby may be born very suddenly in the ambulance as it were on the way to the hospital then again with the first child the woman may be in labour for a day or two but the result is the birth of a living baby and so it is spiritually some likes all of Tarsus cut down in their sins on the road as it were to demerice some like

Timothy of whom it appears the work was gradual but it is just as certain just as effective in the end whether suddenly or gradually you see the Lord appoints his way but each one will be know will know by the Holy Spirit's teaching that they are sinners and it will then not be with them like a natural conviction like Adam and Eve to blame someone else the woman thou gavest me she gave to me and I did eat not my fault and the woman said the serpent be god me don't blame me a natural conviction but if it is of the Holy Spirit we shall say with that repenting thief upon the cross we indeed justly for we receive the due reward of our deeds but this man hath done nothing amiss nothing amiss and then that soul will be taught increasingly as they are able to bear the sword the depths of their sins you read of

Ezekiel being told to turn again and thou shalt see greater abominations and while younger friends might be surprised I'm sure older friends would agree we feel ourselves greater sinners now than we did in the days of our youth in feeling ourselves greater sinners is eternal death and torment will be our purge if we have a love to the

Lord there will be a desire to know him you can see it in everyday figure of a young courting couple when love first begins between one and the other there will be that desire to know the other more and more any excuse to be in their company they'll be there if the object of their love is being spoken about they'll want to creep up and hear what he said anything written they'll read it again and again now the scriptures speak of Christ from cover to cover and if you and I have a love to the Lord we shall want to read and meditate upon his word constantly and especially at those times it may be in the silent hours of the night or the early morning before the distractions of the day come upon us

I say the more love we have to the Lord the more we shall desire to know him and reading in the epistle to the Philippians you see how the apostle Paul and remember he was now had been an apostle many many years he was not just now arrived at Damascus after being convinced of his sins in Philippians he speaks of his overwhelming desire counting all things else but dung and dross something that costs us to get rid of that's what's set before us sacrifice is something that is costly the widow who cast in her two mites made a greater sacrifice than they who cast in great amounts because it was she cast in all that she had and he counted all things but dung and dross that he might win

[ 29 : 41 ] Christ and be found in him that I may know him and the power of his resurrection and the fellowship of his sufferings and be made conformable to his death well much might be said concerning being taught our sinnership our need of Christ the disciples came to the Lord and said Lord teach us to pray as John also taught his disciples we cannot now go through that so called Lord's prayer though I feel his prayer is really the Lord's prayer is that prayer in the garden he did not need to pray for himself forgive us our trespasses he had none to forgive but you know the prayer to which

I refer and while I won't develop in prayer now it is a great subject but you and I need to be taught this aspect to pray after that manner and in this respect that the first three petitions of that prayer do not ask for anything for the person who is praying have you considered that the first three petitions of that prayer seek God's glory our father which art in heaven reminding us of our need of humility to remember whom we are addressing and perhaps with a grain of faith we be able to say father or if children then ours join ours with Jesus God which art in heaven first petition is hallowed be thy name oh if there's anything causes me grief and I trust it is with you it is to hear

God's name taken in mine to hear the name of Christ or Jesus as an expletive or to read it in the paper hallowed be thy name second petition thy kingdom come thy gospel kingdom reign only as king and thirdly thy will be done on earth as it is in heaven so the first three petitions are for his glory before we ask for anything for ourselves even for the forgiveness of our sins in a gospel sense we should keep the two great commands thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy strength with all thy might and him only shalt thou serve and the second is like unto him thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophet do we not need then to pray from the heart

Lord teach us to pray teach us to pray and we might join that with this expression a prayer for a teachable spirit I had a great uncle who used to give the hymns out at Oakington in my boy and I suppose all of us who pray especially those of us who pray in public often use similar expressions again and again because feeling the same need we ask for the same things and this has often tried me though I have been comforted by this consideration the Lord in the garden of Gethsemane went away and prayed saying the same words and that was no vain repetition was it he prayed saying the same words three times but

I was going to say this dear great uncle of mine I remember him well he used to constantly pray for a teachable spirit for a teachable spirit and the last time he prayed in public was in our school room where God willing we hold our service tomorrow night and he sat down after engaging in prayer and passed into eternity mr.

[ 34 : 47 ] e.g. rowell who was the pastor wrote you can read it in the gospel standard obituary of the time that he prayed his prayer sounded as if he was almost already in heaven certainly he was on the threshold he said do we not pray this prayer let me die the death of the righteous let my last end be like him but I must come to this other aspect he will teach and may your meditations be on the many things you feel you need of teaching but it will be in the way that he shall choose now I've referred to Job Job was taught but he would never in ten thousand years by nature have chosen to be taught that way then what grace was given

Job when you read that first chapter human reasoning would say the Lord gave to Job and Satan hath taken away but that's not what Job said Job said the Lord gave and the Lord hath taken away blessed be the name of the Lord he knew that though the Sabaeans may have come and so on though he may have known it was at Satan's instigation he knew that it was only by God's permission only by God's permission and by saying blessed be the name of the Lord was he not thanking God for the trial do you ever thank God for your trials the apostle speaks we glory in tribulations also knowing that tribulation worketh patience patience experience experience hope and hope maketh not a shame hymn 300 is one of my favorite hymns for patience when I raised a cry fresh burdens made me raw my foolish heart would then reply for patience pray no more

I fancied patience would be brought before my troubles rose and by such granted help I thought to try out all my woes but Christ has cleared my misty side and taught by him I find that tribulations working right produce a patient mind when our dear saviour would bestow much patience on his friends he loads their shoulders well with woe and thus obtains his hand Daniel gave thanks to God for his trial before he was delivered from the lion's mouth Paul and Silas praised God while their feet were still fast in the fetters and the prison doors were still fast closed you could understand them praising

